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especially cholera, plague and yellow fever, was first presented for consideration at the international sanitary convention of Paris, in 1903, although it had been advocated for some time previously by many sanitarians, notably the late Professor Proust, of Paris. At the request of the convention of 1903, the French government undertook the task of presenting to the nations interested propositions regarding the organization of such a bureau. These propositions were submitted in a final form in August, 1907, and a conference was invited by the government of the French republic, at the instance of the Italian government. This conference was held at Rome, December 3, 1907, the delegates signing for the governments of Belgium, Brazil, Spain, the United States, the French republic, Great Britain and Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal, Roumania, Russia, Switzerland and Egypt. It is believed that the exchange of ideas that will take place at the semi-annual gathering of the governing committee will have a beneficial effect on international sanitation. In organization the bureau resembles the permanent International Postal Bureau and the Bureau of Weights and Measures.

IN a letter to the editor of the *Yale Alumni Weekly*, in reply to a notification of his accession to the title of oldest living graduate of the university, Chester Dutton, '38, wrote recently as follows:

The position of Oldest Living Graduate is *very temporary*. About seven years ago it fell to my early neighbor & friend Mr. L. W. Cutler of Watertown Conn, (Yale 1829), who was a perfect specimen of physical manhood, as well as a man without faults and without enemies, and he held it, I think, for a few weeks.

I recall that more than seventy years ago both Prof. Silliman & Prof. Olmsted predicted many of the wonderful utilities of present day life—Both discussed photography and telegraphy and the use of electro magnetism for power as assured results, only waiting on human ingenuity for methods of production and application. The Ocean Steamer however, the Ocean Cable, & the telephone and the skyscraper—and electrical lighting were not talked of; perhaps not thought of. One problem then regarded with much concern was the future supply of light, as the *whales* were be-

coming scarce. Petroleum was peddled for *medicine* in pint bottles under the name of "rock oil from Kentucky"—Friction (or explosive) matches had come into use about 1834 or 5, 100 matches in a little box, for 25 cents. Prof. Silliman suggested the probable necessity of governments prohibiting their manufacture & sale, on account their possible use by incendiaries.

#### UNIVERSITY AND EDUCATIONAL NEWS

AT the exercises on February 22 in commemoration of the founding of Johns Hopkins University, which opened thirty-three years ago, it was announced that the gift of Mr. Henry Phipps, of New York, for the psychiatric clinic was considerably in excess of \$1,000,000.

A GIFT of \$200,000 to the University of Pennsylvania from an anonymous donor was announced at the exercises on Washington's birthday by provost Harrison. It will be used to establish a department of medical research. The gift was received through Dr. John H. Musser, of the faculty of medicine.

THE sons and daughters of the late Mr. and Mrs. F. C. A. Denkmann, of Rock Island, Ill., have promised to give a library building to Augustana College and Theological Seminary, Rock Island, the building to cost not less than \$100,000, and to be known as "The Denkmann Memorial Library."

BY the will of Dr. Gordon W. Russell, of Hartford, class of '34, Trinity College, receives \$5,000 for the natural history department and a collection of books on that subject.

AN addition has been made to the observatory building at the University of Michigan, including a new dome 40 feet in diameter. The university is also installing a large reflecting telescope which is now approaching completion, and has been designed especially for photographic and spectroscopic work.

COMER HALL, the new engineering building of the University of Alabama, will be ready for occupancy about May 1. It is a large structure of two stories with a ground-floor space something over three quarters of an acre, and will accommodate the departments of civil, mechanical, mining and electrical

engineering and physics. The cost of the building and equipment will be \$150,000. Smith Hall, named for Professor Eugene A. Smith, of the chair of geology, is also nearing completion, and will be occupied by the departments of geology and biology. This building will cost \$100,000. An academic building, to be a duplicate of Smith Hall, will be begun in the near future.

At a session of the committee on education of the Massachusetts legislature on February 24 the establishment of a "Massachusetts College" was considered. The aim of such an institution was explained by Mr. Courtenay Crocker, Mr. Edmund D. Barbour and Professor Thomas A. Jaggar, to be to carry higher education to people not in a position to seek its seats at colleges and universities, to give it at a cost which would bring it within reach of those in less than moderate circumstances, and to furnish a training which would justify the awarding of the degrees of A.B. and A.M. Mr. Barbour has offered to give \$100,000 to promote the plan.

THE trustees of Wesleyan University have voted to abolish coeducation in the institution after the class entering in the fall of 1909. It is planned, however, to establish in connection with the university a college for women.

MR. SAMUEL W. McCALL, congressman from Massachusetts, has declined the offer of the presidency of Dartmouth College.

LORANDE LOSS WOODRUFF, Ph.D. (Columbia), has been advanced to an assistant professorship of biology in Yale University.

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR ROBERT W. HALL has been promoted to the professorship of biology at Lehigh University.

MR. LOUIS A. HERDT, associate professor of electrical engineering at McGill University, will succeed Professor Owens in the chair of electrical engineering.

THE electors to the Waynflete professorship of mineralogy at Oxford have elected Dr. Herbert Lister Bowman, M.A., D.Sc., New College, to the professorship in the place of Dr. Henry A. Miers, D.Sc., fellow of Magdalen,

who resigned this chair last October, on his election to the principalship of London University.

#### DISCUSSION AND CORRESPONDENCE

##### FOREST PRESERVATION

TO THE EDITOR OF SCIENCE: In a recent number of an engineering paper appears an editorial entitled, "How 'Concrete Lumber' Has Made Forest Preservation a Farce." The article opens with the following words:

The fast-perishing forests of America have been the theme of many a statistical lament. "Behold the loss of all this wealth, this criminal waste of natural resources!" cries the statistician, until we find ourselves almost sniffling in sympathy. Amid all this *illogical agitation* (sic) for forest preservation it is well to turn an eye toward the timber of the future "concrete lumber" as it has been aptly called, etc.

Are we to understand that engineers and contractors are willing to look forward to a concrete age, which will be independent of the waste of natural resources? The statistician tells us that the production of cement in 1890 was 335,000 barrels; in 1907 it was 52,000,000 barrels, worth \$56,000,000. Will some one tell us how many tons of coal will be required to manufacture the cement which the world will require during the present century? And then will some one go farther and estimate how many board feet of lumber are likely to be used to make the forms required for concrete construction? The organized effort which is now being made to educate the people, so that wasteful extravagance shall cease, should receive the hearty support of the engineering profession and press. The following statement of Dr. I. C. White, state geologist of West Virginia, is likely to become classic and can not be too often reprinted:

Just as sure as the sun shines and the sum of two and two is four, unless this insane riot of destruction and waste of our fuel resources which has characterized the past century shall be speedily ended, our industrial power and supremacy will, after a meteor-like existence, revert before the close of the present century to those nations